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Montana Kaimin: Griz-'Cat '94, November 18, 1994

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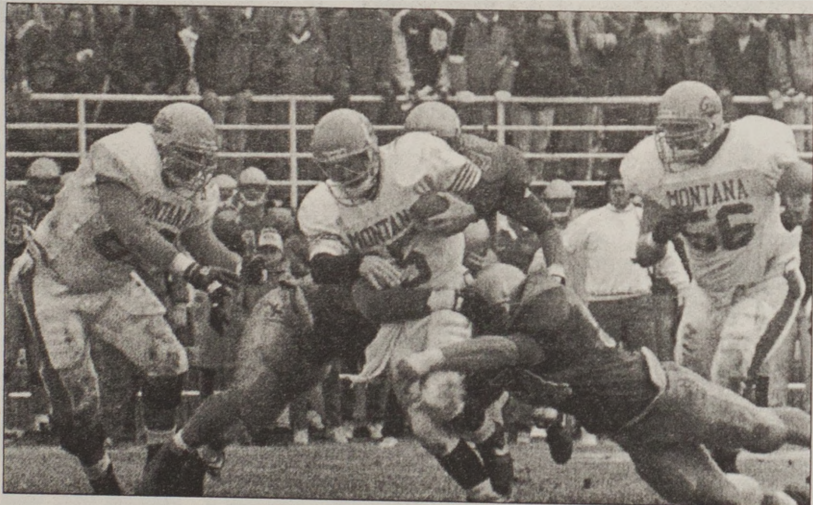
94TH ANNUAL GRIZ - 'CAT RIVALRY

93 GAMES IN THE MAKING



MONTANA'S FIRST football team. The 1897 Grizzlies posted a 1-2-3 record. Their only win was a 18-6 triumph over Montana State.

photo courtesy of UM Sports Information



Joe West offers the Kaimin

MONTANA QUARTERBACK Dave Dickenson struggles out of the grasp of two Montana State defenders in last year's Griz-Cat game. The Grizzlies defeated MSU 42-30, defeating the Bobcats for the eighth straight year.

Yesterday
and
today



THE 1956 Montana State team won the first of three Bobcat national championships. MSU also won the national title in 1976 and 1984.

courtesy of MSU Sports Information

Grizzlies, Bobcats fall short of pre-season predictions

Nikki Judovsky
Kaimin Reporter

The Big Sky Conference pre-season polls do not resemble how the football teams from Montana stand with only one week of regular season play remaining.

Montana State (3-7) was picked to finish in the middle of the pack, while Montana (8-2) was the overwhelming favorite to repeat as conference champions.

But the Bobcats have yet to win a Big Sky game, and the Grizzlies must win on Saturday to keep the playoffs in the picture.

So much for predictions.

MSU opened the season with two non-conference games, at home against Minnesota-Duluth and at Stephen F. Austin. The Bobcats picked up two victories, but it was another eight weeks before they would get a third.

During that seven-game stretch, MSU lost to non-conference foe Cal State-Sacramento and every Big Sky team they played. In those games, MSU was outscored 255-145 and posted a 2-7 record.

To the other extreme, UM did not lose a game until three weeks ago. Now, with two consecutive losses, the Grizzlies have put themselves in a must-win situation.

Montana opened up with Sonoma State and rolled to an easy 41-7 victory. From that point on, the Grizzlies won seven straight games eventually reaching the number-one position.

But when UM traveled to play Boise State three weeks ago, the Grizzlies suffered their first loss of the season. When junior quarterback Dave Dickenson was injured in that game and unable to play against Idaho State, the following week, Montana was suddenly fighting an uphill battle no one expected.

The second straight loss for the Grizzlies knocked UM from

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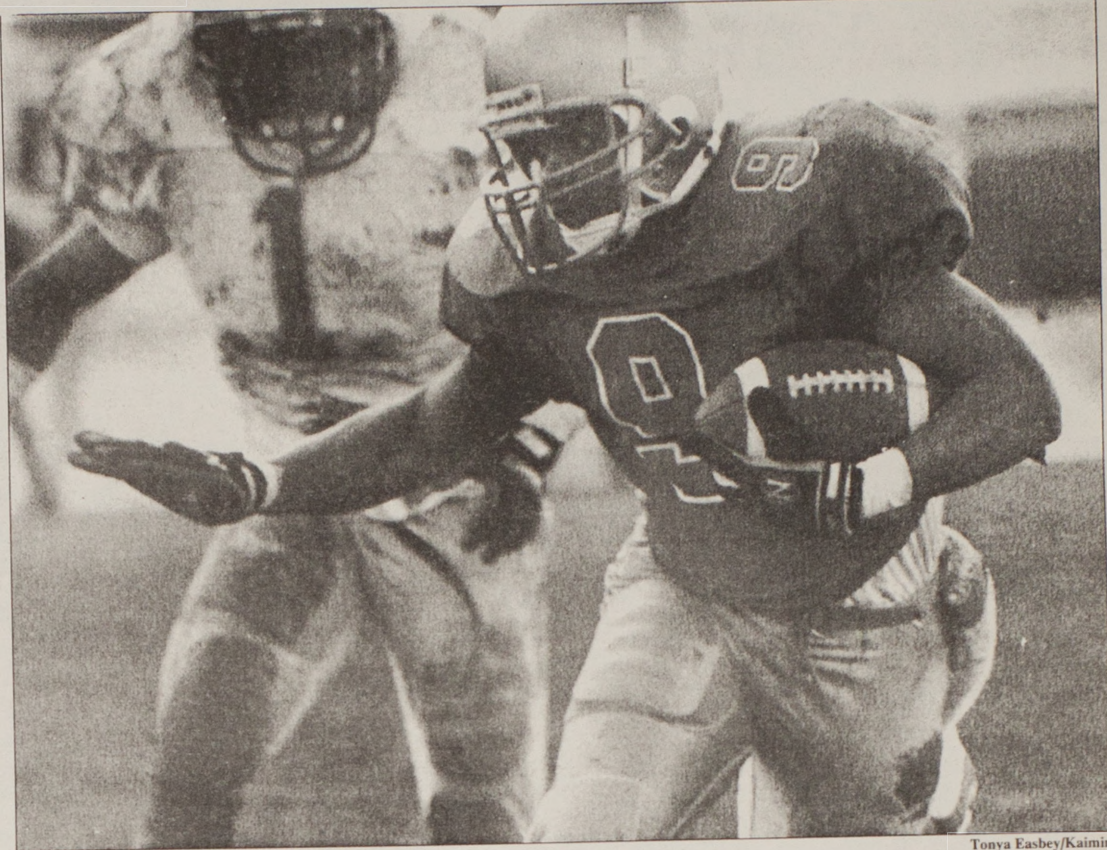
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Tonya Easbey/Kaimin

MSU SENIOR wide receiver Mark Crews flees from a Western New Mexico defender in MSU's 44-6 win. Crews is averaging almost 17 yards a reception for the 'Cats this season.

Big Sky title contention and left them almost certainly needing a win against MSU to qualify for the I-AA playoffs.



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'Cats come to Missoula with little to lose

Corey Taule
Kaimin Sports Editor

One team has everything to lose and the other has very little to lose. This potentially creates a very dangerous situation for the Montana Grizzlies, who probably need a victory over rival Montana State Saturday to ensure a spot in this year's I-AA playoffs.

Still, Montana senior linebacker Kurt Schilling isn't concerned with MSU's state of mind coming into Saturday's contest.

"I'm not worried about what they think," he said. "I just want to go out and get our enthusiasm back. I want to go out prepared to win."

This Griz-Cat game, the 94th, has an unusual twist to it, though, for nobody seems to know who will be playing quarterback for Montana. Will Dave Dickenson, who continues to nurse his sore ankle, or backup Bert Wilberger get the call? Montana players aren't saying.

"I don't know what his (Dickenson's) status is," UM senior wide receiver Scott Gurnsey said. "He says he's gonna play."

Whether they face Dickenson or not, MSU players realize that a win over the 11th ranked Grizzlies would go a long way towards healing the

wounds of the current 3-7 season.

"It will bring a lot of satisfaction because it's been such a bad season for us," said MSU quarterback Brock Spencer.

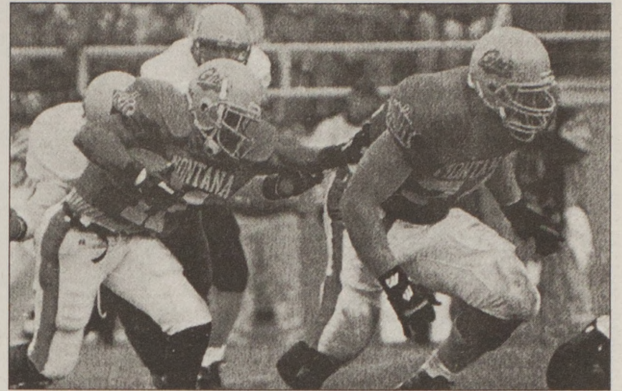
"I think we need this game to salvage our season," Bobcat linebacker Chris Ogle said.

Montana does have history on its side, as the Grizzlies have won the last eight meetings between the teams. However, Gurnsey said that statistic could work to MSU's advantage.

"We've had good success the last eight years against them, but on the other hand, they're sick of losing to us and that's going to be a great incentive for them," he said. "Also, their seniors, I'm sure could make their careers by beating us."

Still, what makes the Griz-Cat game special for Bobcat senior offensive lineman Kerry Pribnow, is not numbers or streaks, but the passion and intensity that the games are played with.

"This will be the fourth one that I've played in and it's just like no other game that I've played," he said. "You go into a game and you've got this



Joe Weston/for the Kaimin

MONTANA RUNNING BACK Damon Boddie follows the block of teammate Scott Gragg in Montana's 45-21 win against Idaho this year. The Grizzlies, at that time, were the number one ranked team in the nation.

first-play anxiety or nervousness that goes away after the first play and you can start thinking football. But for the 'Cat-Griz game you just never lose that. You've got that knot in your stomach and that adrenaline running the whole game. The intensity is an unreal phenomenon."



#11 Montana Grizzlies, 8-2 vs. Montana State Bobcats, 3-7

•Saturday, Nov. 19, 12:07 p.m.
•Washington-Grizzly Stadium

(15,400, Natural Grass)
•This is the 94th meeting between the teams. Montana leads the series 56-32-5 and has won the last eight games.

•The game will be televised live on the Montana Television Network.

Offense:

We all know how good Montana is with Dave Dickenson at quarterback. However, with backup Bert Wilberger at the helm, the Grizzly offense was held scoreless in the second half by Idaho State last week. Still, Wilberger threw for 394 yards and assuming he plays, has the best receiving corps in the Big Sky Conference and tailback Damon Boddie to help him out.

The numbers don't lie. Montana

State is last in the conference in total offense and scoring offense. The Bobcats try to control the ball with tailbacks Fred Moore and Clint Morton, then throw to wide receiver Eric Hopkins, who is one of the best in the Big Sky. However, injuries in the offensive line have hurt the offense's productivity.

Without Dickenson, Montana's offense is still better than the Bobcat's. With Dickenson, the Grizzlies are as good as anyone in the country.

•Edge: Montana

Defense:

Montana will be glad to see the familiar ankle-high grass of Washington-Grizzly stadium after being burned two weeks in a row by speed teams on artificial turf. The Grizzlies have been stingy at home, giving up an average of 16 points a game. The senior linebacking corps of Kurt Schilling, Dan

Downs, Dennis Scates and Garrett Venters will be important against MSU's ball-control offense.

Montana State gives up almost 29 points a game, second worst in the conference. The 'Cats have struggled to stop the pass, which doesn't bode well against Montana. Montana State will need a consistent pass rush from its undersized defensive line, if it hopes to contain the UM air-show.

•Edge: Montana

Special Teams:

Montana's special teams are solid, but have not made big plays like they did last year. Still, Shalon Baker is 12th in the nation in punt returns and Damon Boddie constantly gives UM good field position with good kickoff returns. Punter Scott Gurnsey is enjoying his best season, averaging almost 41 yards a kick, 12th in the country. Only sophomore kicker Andy Larson remains somewhat of an enigma. Larson has booted two 42-yard field goals this year, but he has

also missed four extra points.

MSU kicker Geoff Groshelle has been consistent, making eight of 11 field goal attempts. However, punter Eric Melone is average at best and the 'Cats rank low in the Big Sky in both punt and kickoff returns, though junior Eric Hopkins is a dangerous returnman.

•Edge: Montana

Overall:

With or without Dave Dickenson, Montana is the better team. However, in a heated rivalry like this one, you can throw all the numbers out. If Montana doesn't come to play, the 'Cats could win. However, with a possible playoff berth on the line, the Grizzlies should be flying all over the field. If Wilberger plays, look for Don Read to again shorten the passing game and for Damon Boddie to have a big day like he did against Idaho State. The Grizzlies, if they get an early lead, should win easily.

The Final Line: Montana 28 Montana State 14



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The players' perspective

The Grizzlies speak out

Interviews by Kevin Crough

This interview was conducted with UM Grizzly seniors Kurt Schilling, a 5-foot-11, 202-pound line-backer from Shelby, Scott Gurnsey, a 6-foot, 200-pound receiver from Tumwater, Wash. and junior Eric Simonson, a 6-foot-5, 295-pound offensive tackle from Plentywood. Montana is 8-2.

You face a must-win situation to secure a spot in the playoffs. Does that give you extra incentive to beat the 'Cats?

Schilling: It gives us incentive to come back and play good like we were playing before the last couple of weeks. It just happens to be we're playing Montana State this game.

Gurnsey: It's very important, that's for sure, but I don't think we need any incentive when it comes to playing the 'Cats. It's a big game for us seniors. This is one of the most important games we'll probably play for the rest of our lives, and we want to come out and win it.

Will the cross-state rivalry, or the must-win situation for the playoffs be the main fuel for winning?

Schilling: We are just concentrating on winning, just like we do every week. It just happens to be the in-state rivalry, and it is a must-win situation. So if you put that together in some big magical formula, then it comes out as a must-win against the Bobcats.



Scott Gurnsey

Since hosting Idaho, you've had three straight weeks of conference play and have lost some key players to injuries. Will that hurt your chances to win a ninth straight over the 'Cats?



Chris Ogle

Will the fuel of the Griz-'Cat rivalry and your underdog status help you prepare for a possible upset in this years' rivalry?

Pribnow: This rivalry is something to see, and for us this year, it's really a must-win situation. We're not expected to win, being the underdog, especially in the toughest stadium in the conference to win in. For us, it's go out and practice every day and pray for it.

What's the main concern, knocking off one of the top teams in the nation, or defeating a cross-state rival?

Pribnow: The fact that they're a top team doesn't come to my mind as much. It's that they're the Grizzlies, we've lost to them eight years in a row, and what concerns me is going and beating a team I have yet to beat in a five-year career.

Spencer: I think defeating the cross-state rival is the main thing, it doesn't matter if they had a losing season, that would still be the biggest game of the year for us.

If you do pull off an upset, what kind of satisfaction will it be to end a losing season that way?

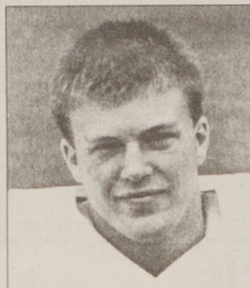
Ogle: I'd say it would be a definite bright spot in our season, as any win would be at this point.

Pribnow: It would make our season. We started off with high hopes after having such a good campaign last year and winning our first two games this year. Somewhere along the line we lost our momentum, and if you know anything about football, it's a huge game of momentum. When you lose it, it's hard to get back. Our

Schilling: No, it shouldn't at all. It shouldn't affect us whatsoever. We have players who are hurt, but we have players that back them up. And no one should feel sorry for us because we've had injuries, that's a part of the game. We need those players, who are in backup positions, to step up and play. We have confidence in each other.

Simonson: Those guys that are hurt, they're going to be out there playing whether they got a stump on their leg or what.

What does the term, Griz-'Cat rivalry spark in your head at first mention?



Kurt Schilling

Simonson:

Knockdown, drag-out brawl, is what I think of.

Gurnsey: Hatred. I know some of the guys on their team and they're good guys, but it's just, well I'm sure they hate us just as much as we hate them. It's a great tradition, and it's probably one of the greatest rivalries in America.

Do you have any personal battles with guys across the line from years past?

Simonson: No, but my brother is a freshman in Bozeman, redshirting there, so it's interesting about the family dynamics.

Who's the family pulling for?

Simonson: Well, they're pulling for the Griz, of course.

What kind of tradition do you think you have been a part of?

Gurnsey: I think winning the national championship and beating the 'Cats five years in a row is very close in comparison for me. That's the thing that people will be talking about in the years to come.

Having played in Griz-'Cat games before, what's going to be special about this one, being your last?

Schilling: This year, every game's been special to me. I'm just thankful all my family will be able to watch it. I think what's special about it, is that all the guys I've played with over the years come up to me and told me I've done a good job.

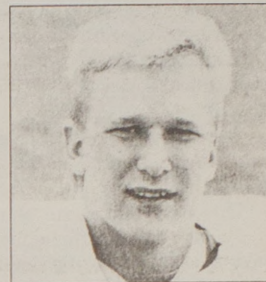
What's your most memorable Griz-'Cat moment?

Schilling: I've been fortunate. I've been able to do some good things in this game. Probably when I got that interception as a freshman. But there have been some guys that have done some things in the games that I remember pretty well too. Like Danny Downs last year, getting his first interception of his career. I remember him trying to make ump-twenty moves, and the field was all slippery and he probably only got one or two yards out of the whole deal.

Gurnsey: The first touchdown of my career came against the Bobcats two years ago, so that was really special. The whole game last year was great because we wrapped up an undefeated conference and I broke the single-season receiving record in the same game and I got named player of the game, so that was pretty special.

What can you say about the intensity of the game, and the crowd?

Gurnsey: It's no holds barred, I'm sure every call the officials make, there's going to be a 'b-u-u-l-l-shit' from the crowd. Everybody's going to be drunk, obnoxious, and that's great and that's what it's all about. They're great fans and it's just a great motivation for us to play in front of them.



Eric Simonson

From the 'Cats' eye

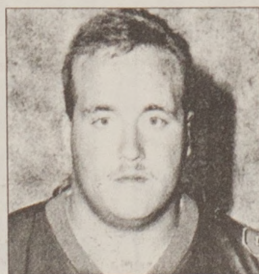
This interview was conducted with Montana State Bobcat seniors Chris Ogle, a 6-foot-2, 217-pound line-backer from Bozeman, Kerry Pribnow, a 6-foot-6, 292-pound offensive tackle from Lambert, and Brock Spencer, a 6-foot-3, 208-pound quarterback from Clinton, Utah. The Bobcats are currently 3-7.

coach has a saying, the games in November are the ones you remember.

Considering UM's advantage in the overall series and the streak, what challenge does it pose for you and your team?

Ogle: UM is a good team, they're going to pose the challenges on offense and defense as any other team. But they have some special weapons, for instance in Dickenson and their receiving corp. We need to work on our pass defense, because I know they're going to throw the ball a lot, but they've also got the backfield threat, so it will really be a team concept.

Spencer: We know for sure that they definitely know how to win, they've won year after year for these last couple of years, they know what it takes to win.



Kerry Pribnow

Offensively, they're going to be tough to stop, and defensively, we know they have a better team this year.

What does the Griz-'Cat rivalry spark in your mind at first mention?

Ogle: Fierce competition. The game is set out on its own from the rest of the season. You play all of your regular season

games then you come to the Griz game and it doesn't matter what the teams are ranked or what their records are, it's just a grudge-match between two teams going for the bragging rights for the state of Montana.

Being from Bozeman, does the 'Cat-Griz rivalry have a deeper meaning for you?

Ogle: I don't know if it gives it a deeper meaning, because the meaning as it is, is pretty deep already. And being a Bobcat, you understand the 'Cat-Griz rivalry. But being from Bozeman, I've seen so many of them, I know the history of the game, it does push me a little bit more.

What kind of tradition do you feel you have

participated in?

Pribnow: It's something that I think I'll look back on with a lot more nostalgia than I do right now. I'm in the midst of it and I want to win. I don't think 'God I'm in a 'Cat-'Griz game,' I just want to beat these guys. Right now, I just want to start our own tradition here. And to be honest, the Griz are probably the best team I've ever seen in 1-AA, so to do it, we'll have to play phenomenally.

What's your most memorable 'Cat-Griz moment, as a fan or a player?

Ogle: Probably last year, how they walked in with the number eight on their helmets. That angered me, and I'll always remember that.

Pribnow: Probably my true freshman year. We had some injuries so they let me travel with the team to Missoula. It was my first traveling experience on the team. I remember walking down to the field that year, they (UM) had something like 17,000 fans in that little area, and having old ladies and little kids spit on us. That's where I realized the intensity of the game.

Being from a small Montana town, what does the 'Cat-Griz rivalry mean to you?

Pribnow: Coming from eastern Montana, and everybody from eastern Montana is essentially 'Cat fans, I grew up dreaming to play for the 'Cats. My best friend, Jeremy Lake, plays guard for the Griz basketball team, and I haven't been able to say a word to him for five years now, so I need to get some bragging rights.

Your final game as a Bobcat, what does this one mean to you, beyond the rivalry?

Spencer: Being the last game of my college career, I just want to have the best game I possibly can, that's usually what I'm going to remember the most. I want our team to win.



Brock Spencer

Baker stands tall in UM record books

Nikki Judovsky
Kaimin Reporter

Shalon "the touchdown maker" Baker is Montana's little big man.

Since coming to Missoula from Vancouver, Wash. four years ago, the 5-foot-5 receiver/punt returner has become an influential leader and has set three Grizzly career records, including touchdowns (25), catches (178) and receiving yards (2,480).

Assistant head coach Robin Pflugrad first noticed Baker during a 1989 recruiting trip.

"I saw him play when he was only a junior," Pflugrad said. "I knew then, that was a guy I wanted to have. I could care less how tall he was."

Looking more like a wrestler than a football player, Baker said some schools shied away from him as a college prospect because he was short.

"I was fairly highly recruited," Baker said, "But when it

came down to it, most teams, they were kind of skeptical because of my height."

And that was part of the reason he chose UM.

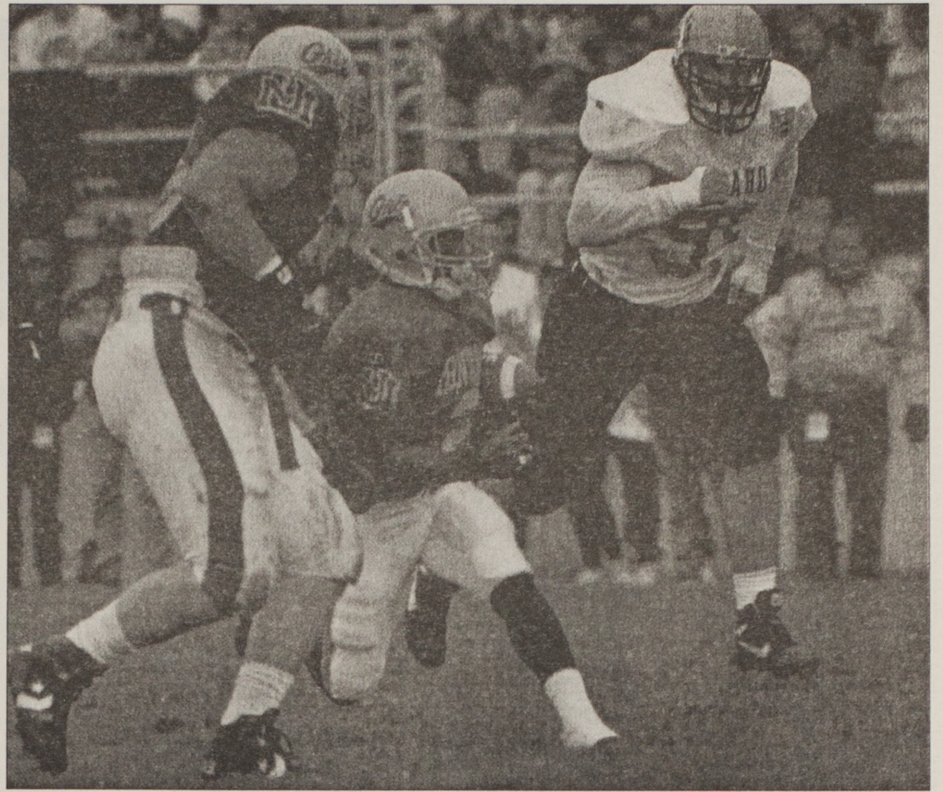
"(Montana's coaching staff) didn't mention my height at all," Baker said. "They told me that they wanted me and they felt if I came here I could contribute to their team."

Baker also said the Grizzly fan support swayed his decision.

"When I came on my recruiting trip, I was here for the 'Cat-Griz basketball game, and the fans were going crazy. I'd never seen that before. I knew this was where I wanted to come."

Montana wasted no time before using Baker's abilities. As a freshmen, he became a starter when Shannon Cabunoc was injured. Baker finished the season with over 700 yards receiving and five touchdown catches.

Offensive coordinator Mick Dennehy said the coaches



Joe Weston/for the Kaimin

DIMINUTIVE MONTANA receiver Shalon Baker squeezes between a teammate and an Idaho defender in UM's win over the Vandals. Baker is the Grizzlies career leader in receptions, receiving yardage and touchdown receptions.

contemplated redshirting Baker, but "we needed him and he knew he could play. He knew he could be a contributor."

Pflugrad said Baker progressed quickly his freshman season by learning the system and watching film. So when Cabunoc returned to the line up the following year, the only thing he had up on Baker was experience.

"Baker needed to do things (his sophomore year)," Pflugrad said. "He only lacked the experience that Shannon had."

But Baker said he struggled more than the coaches realized. And often felt as though he wanted to pack it in and go home.

"I didn't like standing on the sidelines, not playing," Baker said. "But you can't lose

your spot to injury, I knew that, and Cabunoc was back."

Baker matured that season, he said mostly with the help of then-receiver/punt returner Bill Cockhill.

"He kind of helped me out with being away from home," Baker said. "He wasn't like a teddy bear or nothing, but he was more of a 'grow up, you're out of high school now, you gotta grow up now' guy."

As a result of that maturity, Baker has developed into a leader for Montana.

Baker said he's not the type of guy who attracts attention, but rather a leader who the team knows they can count on "to at least do my job, that I'm always gonna be there for them, no matter what."

Dennehy said Baker's best characteristic is that he leads the team without realizing he's really doing it.

"Great leaders are guys who don't perceive themselves as being great leaders," Dennehy said. "Just the way they are creates leadership. In that case, we can say he is a great leader."

Following this season, Baker hopes to take his game up a level, either to the CFL or NFL. He said scouts have come to look at offensive lineman Scott Gragg and ended up talking

to him after games.

Even though Baker wouldn't name any of the teams that have shown interest in him, he said the majority of them have been from the CFL.

Baker will most likely run into the same obstacle he did coming out of high school — his 5-foot-5 frame. But he said he still has hopes of being discovered by some team.

"If you're good enough and if it's the Lord's will, they (professional teams) will find you," Baker said.

Dennehy said even with his lack of height, Baker could still make it.

"Knowing Shalon as I know him, I wouldn't count him out. He's a driven man, has lofty goals, and is a dreamer," Dennehy said. "It's an uphill battle, but (professional scouts) have to give him an opportunity to find out how big his heart is."

Pflugrad agreed. "The problem is will he ever get the chance (at the professional level)," he said. "He deserves a chance. If he gets a shot, he should make a team"

Pflugrad said he and the rest of the Grizzly football staff will do their best to get Baker a try out somewhere.

"We'll all try hard for Shalon because he's tried so hard for us."

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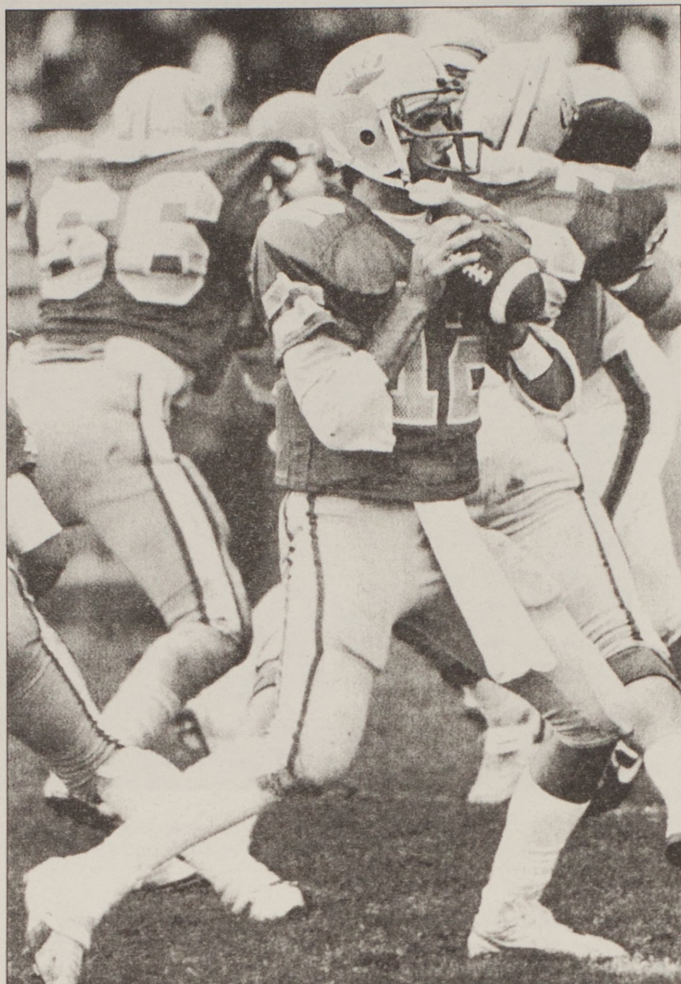
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—Thank you, Corey Taule



MSU

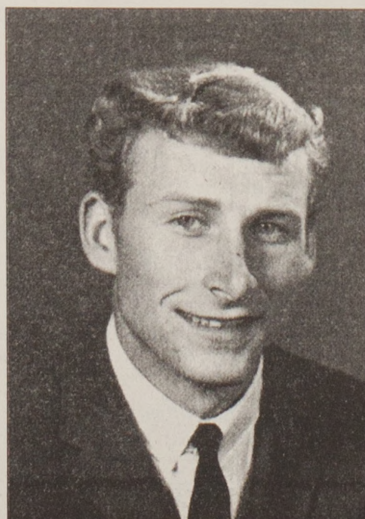


MSU QUARTERBACK Kelly Bradley led the 'Cats to their third national championship in 1984. Bradley holds five MSU passing records.

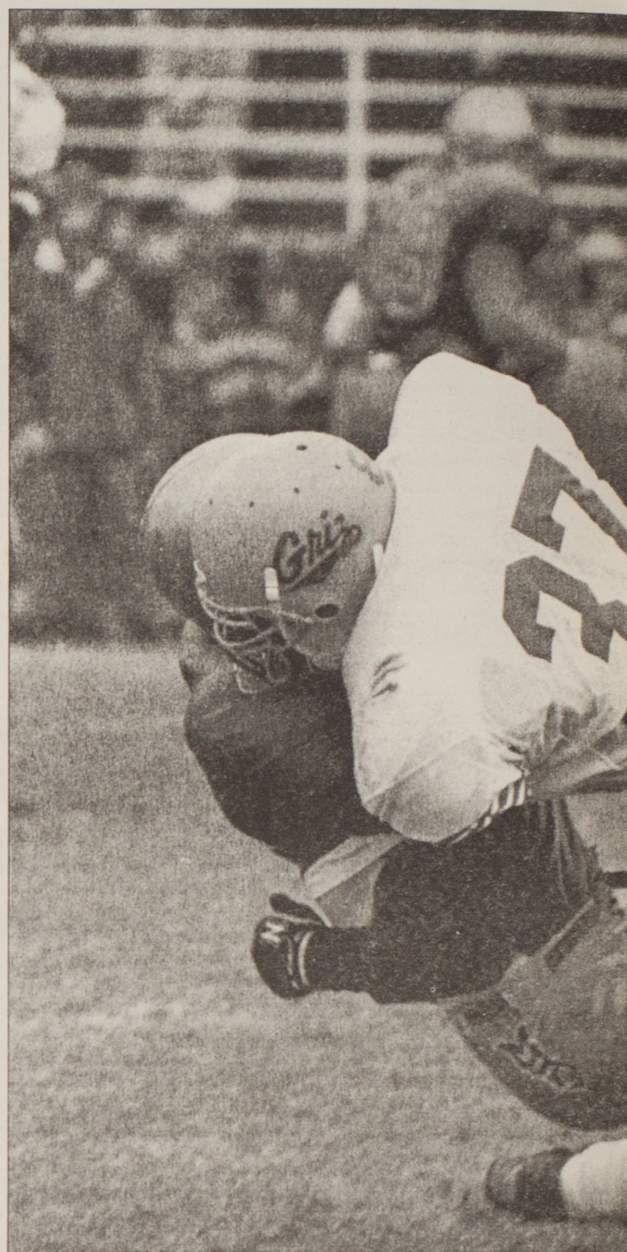


DEFENSIVE TACKLE Bill Kollar was once an All-American for the Bobcats. He is currently a coach with the Atlanta Falcons.

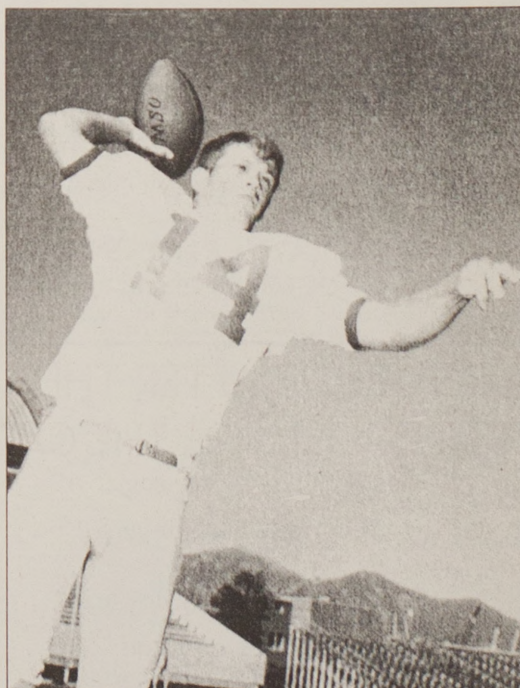
IN 1992, JAN Stenerud became the first placekicker to ever be inducted into the NFL Hall of Fame. At MSU, Stenerud was on the ski team and ended up revolutionizing the science of kicking with his side-winding "soccer style."



THE PASSING C THROUGH THE P

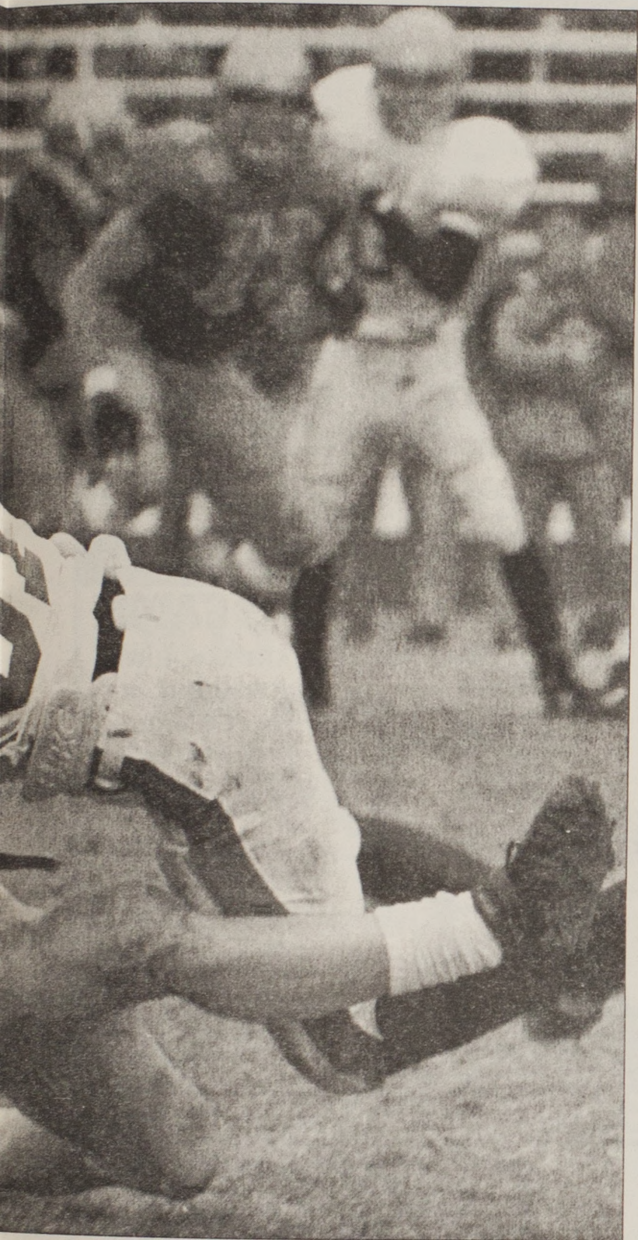


FORMER UM DEFENSIVE back Todd Ericson tackles a Bobcat running back, winning the 'Griz-Cat game for the eighth year in a row.

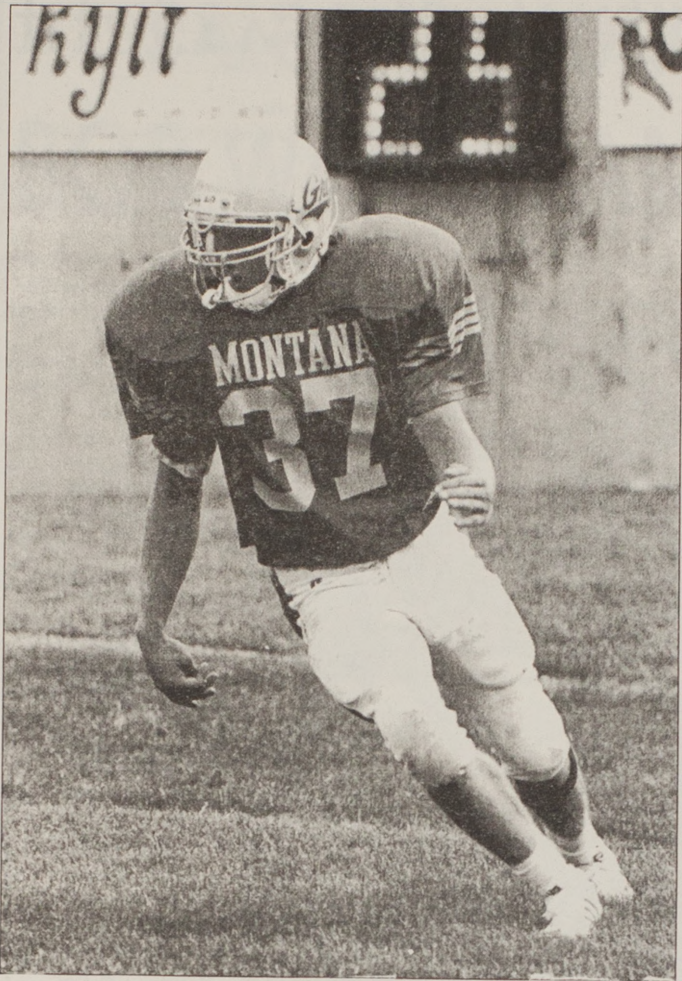


DENNIS ERICKSON was an all-conference quarterback for the 'Cats from 1967-68 and led MSU to three Big Sky titles. Erickson is now the head football coach at the University of Miami.

OF THE PIGSKIN PASSAGE OF TIME



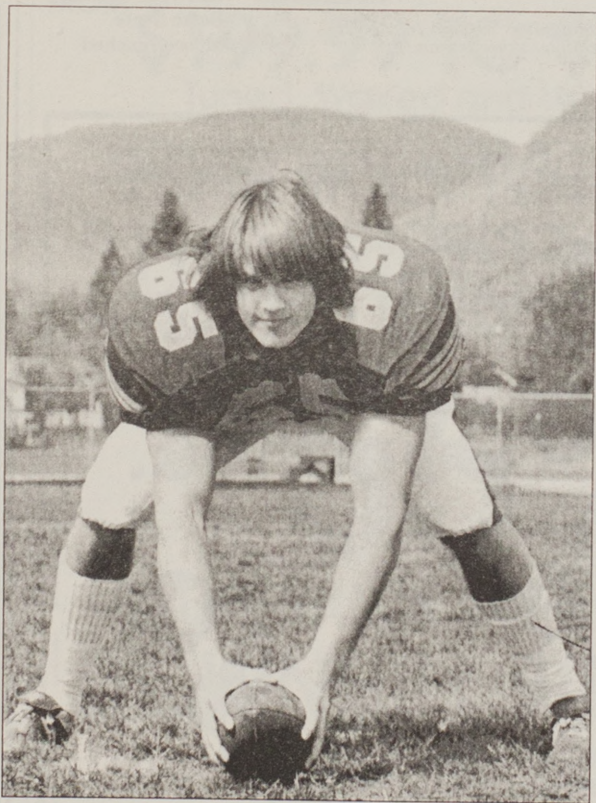
Joe Weston/for the Kaimin
in last year's game in Bozeman. The Grizzlies defeated MSU 42-30,



TIM HAUCK was a first team All-American in 1988-89 for Montana. A former walk-on in college, Hauck now plays for the Green Bay Packers.



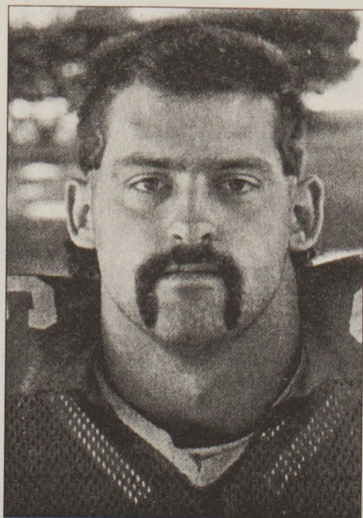
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M



FORMER UM GREAT Guy Bingham was a two-time All Big Sky Conference selection and played with the New York Jets and Washington Redskins during his NFL career.



JIM MORROW shows off the form that propelled him into UM's football Hall of Fame. Morrow played quarterback for the Grizzlies from 1927-1929.



A FORMER NINTH round draft pick of the Los Angeles Rams, Pat Foster was a four-year letterman for UM from 1984-87.

Photos courtesy
of UM and MSU
Sports Information

Morton feels the weight of MSU losses

Johnna Espinoza
for the Kaimin

Saturday's Grizzly-Bobcat game will be a defining moment for Montana State tailback Clint Morton. Morton is a senior, and like the rest of his graduating class, he has never experienced a victo-

ry over the Grizzlies.

For Morton, Saturday's contest will be all about pride.

"Personally, I want to go out a winner," Morton said. "I have nothing to lose. I'm going to play my hardest."

Montana defensive line coach Kraig Paulson said the Grizzlies have a healthy amount of respect for Morton.

"He is as good a back as we will face," Paulson said. "He does it all."

Paulson said he is not making the mistake of underestimating the Bobcats or Morton, who has 354 yards rushing and three touchdowns this season.

"He had a long run against us last year," Paulson said. "We respect him, he's a good player."

Morton, however, is not the only threat in the MSU backfield. He is only half of the Bobcat's "tailback tandem". Morton alternates with senior Fred Moore, who eclipsed the 100-yard mark on 14 carries earlier this year against Boise State. Moore reached

the 100-yard mark six times in 1993.

Morton said he and Moore may alternate every other series to keep fresh.

He said the game Saturday against Montana will be a battle, and that he and his teammates have been gearing up for almost two weeks now.

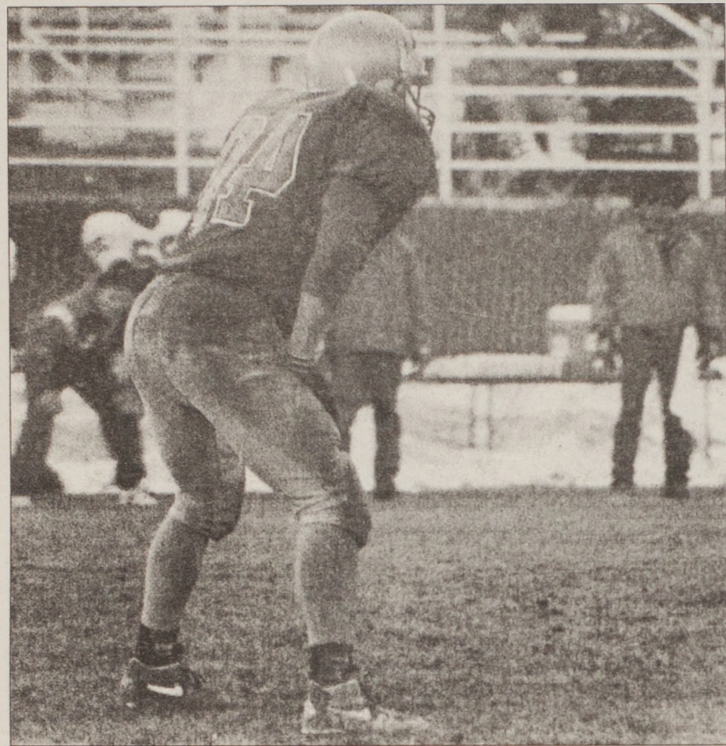
"It's the last game for me and the other seniors," Morton said. "It will be big, very big."

Paulson said he knows the Bobcat players, especially the seniors, will be ready for Montana.

"That's why the game is so special," he said. It's the focal game of their careers," he said.

As the annual Griz-'Cat game gets closer, Morton and the Bobcats would seem to have reason to be more optimistic. The Grizzlies, who once looked invincible, are coming off of two straight losses and have a number key players with injuries. However, because of his healthy respect, or fear, of his coach Cliff Hysell, Morton won't make any predictions about Saturday's game.

"You don't know Coach Hysell," he said.



Tonya Easbey/Kaimin

MSU SENIOR tailback Clint Morton lines up against Western New Mexico. Morton has run for 354 yards and three touchdowns this season.

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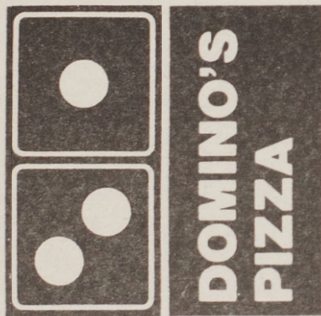
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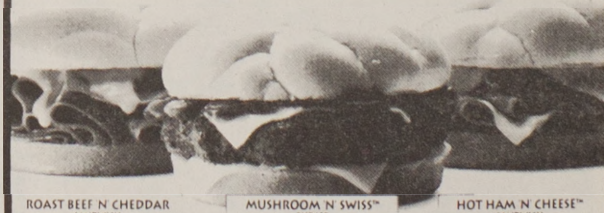
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Hysell feels at home in rivalry

Gregory Ingram
Kaimin Reporter

The annual Griz-Cat football game is the most anticipated sporting event in Montana. And for Montana State head coach Cliff Hysell, the rivalry is a life-long passion.

"It's been something I've grown up with," Hysell, a Montana native, said. "I have been a part of it as a player, then as an assistant coach and now as the head coach."

Hysell, once a starting lineman for the Bobcats, was part of MSU's Big Sky Championship team in 1964 before ending his two-year career in 1965. From 1972-81, he served as an assistant coach at MSU. During that decade, the 'Cats won three Big Sky Conference titles, highlighted by a national championship in 1976.

Hysell left MSU in 1982 to be the inside linebacker coach at Fresno State University under Jim Sweeny, whom he had played for at MSU. Hysell was promoted to defensive coordinator and remained there until he was named the head coach of the 'Cats on December 7, 1991.

"It was one of the greatest days of my life," Hysell said. "I actually cried when I knew I

had a chance to come home.

"I was never really gone. All of the time I was at Fresno State, my heart was with the Bobcats. I would come back to Montana in the summers for a few weeks and go fishing."

Hysell has found many rewarding aspects as the 'Cats' head coach, from having a chance to be back in Montana, to working with the players.

"The best part of being the head coach is it gives me a chance to payback a school that

programs and has strong fan support from the community in Bozeman, and across the state. I also enjoy working with the players and the boosters."

Losing, however, is not something Hysell looks upon with fondness.

"The only downside to the job is losing seven games in a row. I am experiencing new things as head coach. It's a long, drawn-out process."

Rumors have circulated about Hysell resigning to assist

University of Miami coach Dennis Erickson if he lands a pro job, but Hysell takes it in stride.

"There have been a lot of rumors going around for a while," Hysell said. "If the opportunity to coach in the pros ever comes up, I would look at it, but that's a long ways down the road. The rumor of me quitting is false. It was said that I went into the office of the athletic director and gave him my letter of resignation. This would have been hard for me to do because I was in Idaho the day that this was said to have happened."

"There has also been a rumor here of me running around with college girls since I'm not married," Hysell said. "This one is true. I have been spending time with my daughters who go to school here."



Tonya Easbey/Kaimin


MONTANA STATE coach Cliff Hysell prowls the sideline during a game this year. Hysell is in his third year as MSU coach and has a record of 14-18.

gave me a quality education," Hysell said. "MSU is a great school with strong academic

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Read continues to fulfill coaching destiny

Corey Taule
Kaimin Sports Editor

While many of us flounder, searching desperately for our particular niche in life, some people seem fated for a particular destiny. UM's head football coach is living proof of this.

Often haggard looking, and decked-out in a baseball hat and dark sunglasses, Don Read, who has paced Washington-Grizzly stadium's sideline since 1986, never wanted to do anything else.

"I always knew it," said Read. "My whole family had been involved in athletics. I was raised in the ballpark. I wasn't raised at home."

Sitting behind his desk, Read looks more like the kindly grandfather that his family knows him as, than the head coach of the 11th-ranked football team in the country.

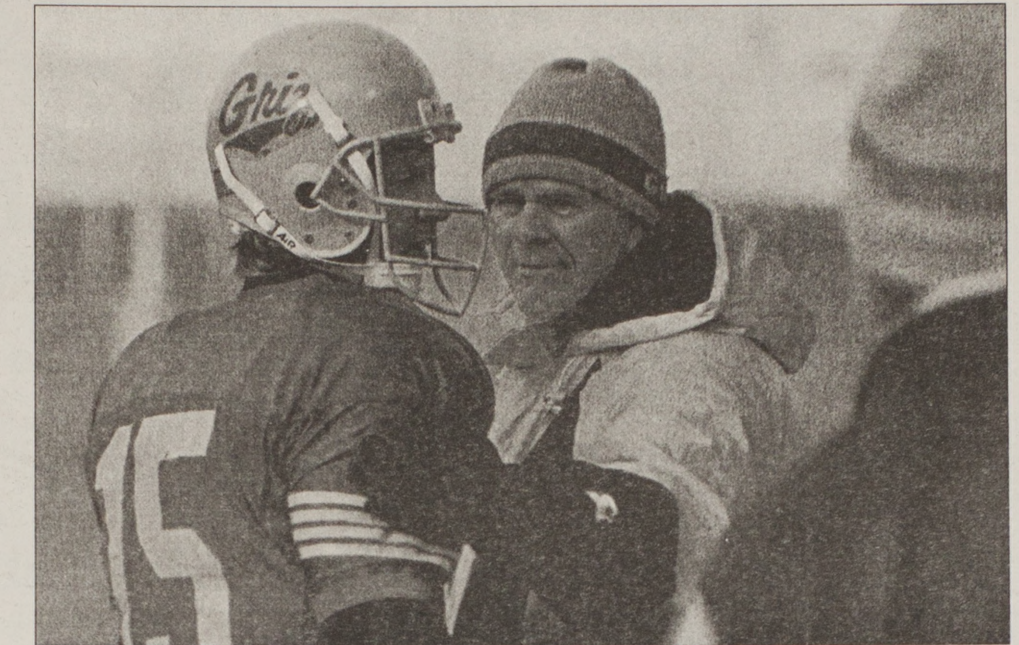


But for 25 years, Read, who is UM's all-time winningest coach with 69 wins, has headed up college football programs throughout the west—Portland State, Oregon, Oregon Tech, PSU again, and finally Montana. His legacy, the passing offense, is detailed in his book, "The Complete Passing Game," and has

been carried on by a list of players and coaches who have been influenced by him.

An impressive list it is. Norv Turner, the head coach of the Washington Redskins, NFL Hall of Fame quarterback Dan Fouts and former St. Louis Cardinal quarterback Tim Lincecum have all taken Read's wisdom with them into professional football.

Still, time spent molding football players is time spent away from home. Nobody understands this



Joe Weston/for the Kaimin

MONTANA COACH Don Read imparts some wisdom to his star pupil, quarterback Dave Dickenson, in last year's Griz-Cat game. Read is Montana's all-time winningest coach and has never had a losing season at Montana.

better than Read.

"It's been hard all my life," he said. "I've been fortunate to have a great family. My wife has moved five times and it was tough on my kids because I couldn't always be around much. My wife raised the kids and the reason I got through college is because she worked. Her sacrifices allowed me to get through."

And the stack of messages on his voice mail and the pile of video tapes of potential recruits that lie behind his desk, indicate that Read's work is far from done, even though the season is waning.

"These (video tapes) are the ones I haven't got to yet," Read said. "But they will be gone by the

end of the week. Recruiting is the hardest part of coaching because it never ends. The season ends, but recruiting goes on for 12 months."

In his 25 years, Read has experienced good times, like last year's 10-2 team, and he has gone through lean years, like the ones at Oregon, where he posted a 9-24 record over three years. What he has never experienced though, is a national championship.

"It's been burning with me for a long time," he said. "The kids in this class have been looking at this for a long time. We've made it tougher in the past few weeks, but we're still in the race. We're just not leading it anymore."

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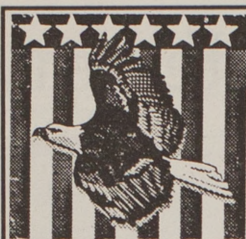
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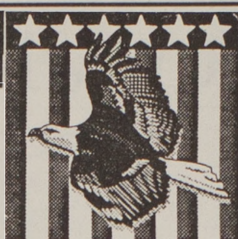
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